

REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 5, 9 and 10 have been amended to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 6 has been amended to positively recite the direct-metal-deposition (DMD) process. Applicant has previously argued extensively with regard to the insufficient teachings of the prior art, namely, Islam ('540), Murnick ('825), Beaman ('405) and Sterett ('844). Accordingly, Applicant incorporates those arguments of record herein.

Based upon the foregoing amendments and comments, Applicant believes the instant application is in condition for allowance. Questions regarding this application may be directed to the undersigned attorney by telephone, facsimile or electronic mail.

Respectfully submitted,

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